

*Carex lasiocarpa* - (*Carex rostrata*) - *Equisetum fluviatile* Herbaceous Vegetation  
(Wiregrass Sedge Shore Fen)

COMMON NAME	Wiregrass Sedge - (Beaked Sedge) - Water Horsetail Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	Wiregrass Sedge Shore Fen
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Herbaceous Vegetation (V)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Perennial graminoid vegetation (V.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (V.A.5.N)
FORMATION	Saturated temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5.N.m)
ALLIANCE	CAREX LASIOCARPA SATURATED HERBACEOUS ALLIANCE

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 2

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM PALUSTRINE

RANGE

***Voyageurs National Park***

This type typically occurs inland from shores around the large lakes.

***Globally***

This association is found in northern Michigan, northern Minnesota, northern Wisconsin, and Ontario.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

***Voyageurs National Park***

This community occurs on floating or grounded mats of peat near the shores of the large lakes. Typically, the peat mat near the edge of open water is floating and can be thin. The mat becomes grounded as it gets closer to the shore. The peat is commonly a fibric sedge peat, though fibric *Sphagnum* peat can occasionally be found in layers below the sedge peat. Standing water 20-50 cm deep is usually present throughout the year in these stands. Most of these stands are located in areas sheltered from extreme wave action and have very little microtopography. The water regime is permanently flooded to intermittently exposed.

***Globally***

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MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

***Voyageurs National Park***

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Fern	<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>
Graminoid	<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>

***Globally***

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Fern	<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>
Graminoid	<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

***Voyageurs National Park***

*Carex lasiocarpa*, *Equisetum fluviatile*

***Globally***

*Carex lasiocarpa*, *Carex rostrata*, *Equisetum fluviatile*

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program  
Voyageurs National Park

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

**Voyageurs National Park**

The Wiregrass Sedge Shore Fen is characterized by a continuous cover of *Carex lasiocarpa*. This community is typically species poor, with some stands harboring as few as four species. Along with *Carex lasiocarpa*, *Equisetum fluviatile* is often found at high density. The following herbs are also common, but usually exist at low cover: *Acorus calamus*, *Polygonum hydropiper*, *Cicuta bulbifera*, *Lysimachia terrestris*, *Calamagrostis canadensis*, and *Carex rostrata*. Few, scattered shrubs of *Chamaedaphne calyculata* may be present. In stands that have standing water, submerged aquatic plants may also be found, including *Utricularia intermedia* and *Potamogeton natans*. The moss, *Warnstorfia exannulata* is also frequent in standing water in this community, though at low density.

**Globally**

Graminoids dominate the stand, with shrub cover typically much less than 25%. *Carex lasiocarpa* can form extensive "lawns". Other species present include *Carex rostrata*, *Equisetum fluviatile*, *Potentilla palustris*, *Triadenum fraseri*, *Utricularia intermedia*, and *Utricularia vulgaris*. *Menyanthes trifoliata* can occur at high cover, especially at the outer edge of the floating mat. Permanent surface pools and small hummocks with *Sphagnum* spp. and ericaceous shrubs may be present. The substrate is a mat of fibric to mesic peat held together by roots and rhizomes (Harris *et al.* 1996).

CONSERVATION RANK G?.

DATABASE CODE CEGLO05229

COMMENTS

**Voyageurs National Park**

Diagnostic features of the type include an herbaceous layer with greater than 70% cover of *Carex lasiocarpa*. Overall, this community is most similar to the Northern Sedge Wet Meadow (CEGL002257) but can easily be distinguished by its dominance of *Carex lasiocarpa* and its restriction to the shores of the large lakes. This type is analogous to Ontario's W14 (Harris *et al.* 1996). Spatially, this community is often located near the Midwest Cattail Marsh (CEGL002233), the Northern Sedge Wet Meadow (CEGL002257), and/or the Water Horsetail Marsh (CEGL005258) and, compositionally, may grade into any of them. Typically, as the peat mat gets closer to shore, it becomes more dominated by *Sphagnum* spp. and more well developed. At this point, other species, especially shrubs, colonize it and the community may grade into a Leatherleaf-Sweetgale Shore Fen (CEGL005228), a Dogwood-Pussy Willow Swamp (CEGL002186) or a Bog Birch-Willow Shore Fen (CEGL005227). Floristically, this community is also similar to the Northern Sedge Poor Fen (CEGL00265) in that both are dominated by *Carex lasiocarpa*. The Northern Sedge Poor Fen, however, usually has a significant cover of *Sphagnum* spp. and *Chamaedaphne calyculata* and is found only in the Rat Root Peatland.

REFERENCES

Harris, A. G., S. C. McMurray, P. W. C. Uhlig, J. K. Jeglum, R. F. Foster, and G. D. Racey. 1996. Field guide to the wetland ecosystem classification for northwestern Ontario. Ont. Minist. Nat. Resour., Northwest Sci. Tech. Field Guide FG-01. Thunder Bay, Ont. 74 p.